UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1931
10 July 1995

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General says United Nations operations in former Yugoslavia at turning point; says he opposes withdrawal, however parties must recreate conditions to enable Organization to carry out its mandate.

* Situation in Srebrenica deteriorates as both Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Government forces attack United Nations peace-keepers.

* Security Council President condemns attacks on UNPROFOR personnel and detention by Bosnian Serbs of Dutch peace-keepers.

* Secretary-General convenes sixth round of talks on question of East Timor; meets with Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Portugal.

* Secretary-General begins 3-day official visit to Greece.

* Secretary-General recommends mandate of International Civilian Mission in Haiti be extended until 7 July 1996.

* Economic and Social Council calls for urgent measures to ameliorate deteriorating socio-economic situation in Africa.

* Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) recommends General Assembly appropriate $270 million for UNAMIR and ONUSAL.

* Annual commemoration of World Population Day to be observed tomorrow by more than 150 countries.

The United Nations operations in the former Yugoslavia are at a turning point, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He said the steady deterioration in Bosnia and Herzegovina in recent weeks was making it difficult for the United Nations to carry out its humanitarian and peace-keeping tasks, and its previous achievements in those fields were being overlooked by public opinion. The Secretary-General was speaking in Geneva at a weekend meeting of senior United Nations officials responsible for the peace process and humanitarian and peace-keeping operations in the former Yugoslavia.

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The Secretary-General said he was determined to do everything possible to keep the United Nations operation in being so it could carry out the mandate entrusted to it by the international community. Noting the growing calls for the withdrawal of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the Secretary-General said he was opposed to the withdrawal of the United Nations humanitarian and peace-keeping operations from Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or Croatia. However, if present trends were to be reversed and withdrawal avoided, the parties must be persuaded to recreate conditions in which the Organization could carry out its mandate.

Senior officials attending the meeting included Special Representative Yasushi Akashi; the Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations, Kofi Annan; Special Advisors, Chinmaya Gharekhan and Ismat Kittani; Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Marrack Goulding; the Force Commander of the United Nations Peace Forces in the former Yugoslavia (UNPF), Lieutenant-General Bernard Janvier; UNPROFOR Force Commander in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith; the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sadako Ogata; and Thorvald Stoltenberg, the Co-Chairman of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

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The situation in the eastern Bosnian enclave of Srebrenica was deteriorating and Bosnian Serbs were shelling the town again today, according to a United Nations spokesman. Serb forces, who have been attacking the enclave since last Thursday, are believed to be within a kilometre of Srebrenica town.

Over the weekend, both Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Government forces attacked United Nations peace-keepers. A Dutch soldier was killed when the Bosnian army fired on peace-keepers, as they moved out of blocking positions, ahead of a Bosnian Serb advance south of Srebrenica. A hand grenade was thrown by Bosnian Government forces at a UN armoured personnel carrier. The spokesman described the incident as highly dangerous and totally unacceptable.

In other action on the weekend, three United Nations observation posts were over-run and 30 peace-keepers were taken by Bosnian Serbs. However, the UNPROFOR soldiers were still in radio contact with their base in Srebrenica and were allowed to keep their weapons. The Spokesman said the situation was unacceptable and the UN demanded that the peace-keepers be released immediately and allowed to return to their bases with their weapons.

In a letter to the Bosnian Serbs, Special Representative Yasushi Akashi and UNPF Force Commander Lieutenant-General Bernard Janvier condemned the attacks against United Nations peace-keepers and warned the Bosnian Serbs that if they attacked UNPROFOR's blocking position near Srebrenica, NATO close air support

would be used. In another letter, Lieutenant-General Janvier protested the Bosnian Government's hostile action against United Nations peace-keepers. The Secretary-General said in Athens today that the United Nations would not hesitate to use air-power to protect the peace-keepers and the enclaves.

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The Security Council has expressed concern at the deteriorating situation in and around Srebrenica and, in particular, the suffering of the civilian population. In a statement outside the Council Chamber to United Nations correspondents, Council President Gerardo Martinez Blanco (Honduras), demanded that all parties fully respect the status of the safe area of Srebrenica.

Ambassador Martinez Blanco said the Security Council condemned the attacks on UNPROFOR personnel and the detention by the Bosnian Serbs of the Dutch contingent. The Council also demanded that the Bosnian Serb forces release immediately and unconditionally the detained personnel and that all parties respect UNPROFOR's safety and freedom of movement.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali convened the sixth round of talks over the weekend in Geneva on the question of East Timor, meeting first with Foreign Minister Ali Alatas of Indonesia and then with Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of Portugal.

The objective of the meeting was to find a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement to the question of East Timor, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Ministers discussed the eventual framework for the achievement of such a solution and other related issues, such as the preservation and promotion of the cultural identity of the Timorese people and bilateral relations between Indonesia and Portugal.

Meanwhile, Indonesia's Foreign Minister Ali Alatas has said the whole question of East Timor is a political one that should be resolved in the political bodies of the United Nations. He told correspondents that any solution would require movement by both Portugal and Indonesia on the three substantive issues, however it was impossible to know how long an agreement would take. On the question of possible self-determination by the East Timorese, he said the people of East Timor had already expressed their right to self-determination with the overwhelming majority having chosen independence, through integration, and there was no longer any need for a referendum.

The Portuguese Foreign Minister, Jose Manuel Durao Barroso said there had been some progress in the talks however it was slight. He welcomed news that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Ayala Lasso, would visit East Timor in November and said it was a step forward in opening East Timor to

visits by international organizations. The 7th round of talks between the Foreign Ministers under the auspices of the Secretary-General will be held on 16 January next year in London.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali began his 3-day official visit to Greece today. According to a United Nations spokesman, the main purpose of the visit is to reinforce the relationship between the United Nations and Greece. The Secretary-General met with the Greek Foreign Minister, Karolos Papoulias, who expressed his country's support for the United Nations. Noting the growing demands on the United Nations, Mr. Papoulias recalled Greek efforts to help find a solution to the Organization's financial crisis.

The Secretary-General and the Foreign Minister discussed the deteriorating situation in the former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They also discussed the UN operation in Cyprus and efforts to find solutions to the differences between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the relationship between Greece and Turkey. The Secretary-General will receive the 1995 Onassis international prize for international understanding and social achievement.

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The Secretary-General has recommended that the mandate of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) be extended until 7 July 1996, which is the date when President Aristide's mandate expires. In a report to the General Assembly dated 29 June, the Secretary-General said the mission should continue its present tasks, including those related to the current electoral process.

He said the Mission had made a major contribution to improving respect for human rights in Haiti, both during the period of military rule, when it had to operate in difficult and dangerous conditions, and since the restoration of constitutional order last October.

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The Economic and Social Council has called for urgent measures to ameliorate the deteriorating socio-economic situation of the Africa continent. It has also urged the international community to devote more efforts to helping African countries in their development. The call came as the Council concluded a two-day debate in Geneva over the weekend on the development of Africa, including the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

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During an extended session, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) said governments had a crucial role to play in promoting economic and social development as they maintained law and order, which could provide a sound and secure environment for private enterprise to spring up and thrive. Human resources development and capacity-building, democratic participation in the development process, and the promotion of human rights were mentioned as other main areas of concern in the implementation of the New Agenda.

Several speakers called for a meaningful commitment by the international community to help Africa overcome its acute debt problem which, together with other shortcomings, had hampered sustainable development mainly because of lack of capital. Many countries pledged assistance for Africa in the implementation of the development programme and reiterated their commitments to help African countries achieve sustainable economic and social growth.

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The Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) has recommended that the General Assembly appropriate $270 million for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) and for the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL).

According to the terms of two draft resolutions, approved by the Fifth Committee on Friday, the General Assembly would appropriate the money for various periods, starting from mid-1994 to the end of this year.

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The 1995 annual commemoration of World Population Day will be observed by more than 150 countries tomorrow, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The commemoration is set against the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo last September.

The UNFPA has invited governments, United Nations agencies and organizations, universities and population institutions as well as private citizens to take part part in the observances and to help raise awareness of the goals of the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference as well as the importance of population issues to the future of mankind.

The Fund's Executive Director, Nafis Sadik, said the Conference's consensus in favour of a new approach that moves beyond population and numbers, and targets and places human rights and individual well-being at the centre of sustainable development efforts.

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